Reviewer's report

Title: Severity of acute hepatitis and its outcome in patients with dengue fever in a tertiary care hospital Karachi, Pakistan (South Asia): An Analytic cross sectional study.

Version: 1 Date: 16 July 2009

Reviewer: Fransisco Souto

Reviewer's report:

Review of:
“Severity of acute hepatitis and its outcome in patients with dengue fever in a tertiary care hospital Karachi, Pakistan (South Asia): an analytic cross sectional study.
By Om parkash et al.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
It seems that there is a conceptual mistake about epidemiological methodology. I am not sure that this study was a cross-sectional one, since there was following after hospitalization. Authors compare groups about hospital staying time. They needed more than one evaluation in order to describe lenght of staying and rates of complications. It seemed to me to be a cohort study. Furthermore, the authors used “outcome” in the title, reinforcing the idea of a cohort study.

3. Are the data sound?
Read above.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
The results are not original. However, they are relevant and could interest the journal’s readers.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, but authors should consider use “hepatic involvement” more tha “hepatitis” because “hepatitis” means more than just ALT/AST elevations.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
The main limitation was fairly aproached in “Discussion”: study dealt with inhospital patients.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
The main limitation was fairly approached in “Discussion”: the study dealt with inhospital patients.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
The limitations about methodology and “hepatitis” concept bring some misunderstanding to the title.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
No.

The manuscript presents Major problems, demanding a comprehensive and large major compulsory revision.

There is several mistakes on the use of English language. A profound English review is mandatory.

Results of biochemical parameters could be shown just in Tables. The authors repeated them in the “resuts” text, becoming the text monotonous.

The authors used just ALT/AST levels as “mild / severe hepatitis” concept. They should have used jaundice, cogulopathy, and encefalopathy as others criterias to make this diagnosis more precise.

Definition of the study type and the methodology must be revised.

Finally, the material is quite interesting an appropriate especially to a Tropical Medicine journal. However, the presentation and misconcepts preclude publication. It can be accepted if a major review occurs.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.